

Documents on Diplomacy: Lessons

Going Multilateral: From GATT to the WTO

"The World Trade Organization (WTO) deals with the global rules of trade between nations. The WTO's overriding objective is to help trade flow smoothly, freely, fairly and predictably."

World Trade Organization

Standard: I. Culture
II. Time, Continuity, and Change
III. People, Places, and Environments
V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
VI. Power, Authority, and Governance
VII. Production, Distribution, and Consumption
VIII. Science, Technology, and Society
IX. Global Connections

Grade Level: 9–12

Objectives: The student will:

- Identify different types of trade
- Determine the pros and cons of the WTO
- Describe the impact of liberalization of trade

Time: 1–3 class periods

Materials: Documents: **1994** *Excerpts from the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the WTO*

Resources: *Map: The World Trade Organization*

Exercises: *Analysis of the WTO*

Access to the computer and internet:

- Interactive Graphic: Members and observers of the WTO
http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/countries_e/org6_map_e.htm
- Profile of the WTO from the BBC
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/country_profiles/2429503.stm#facts

Procedures:

1. Have a copy of the unlabeled map on each student's desk at beginning of class.
 - a. Have them speculate what it represents.
 - b. Direct attention to the three colors (groups) and their numbers.
 - c. What organization could accommodate so many countries?
 - d. What might its purpose be?
 - e. What is significant about the countries in the smallest group?
 - f. Introduce the World Trade Organization if its identity is not determined.

Ten Benefits

1. The system helps promote peace
2. Disputes are handled constructively
3. Rules make life easier for all
4. Free trade cuts the costs of living
5. It provides more choice of products and qualities
6. Trade raises incomes
7. Trade stimulates economic growth
8. The basic principles make life more efficient
9. Governments are shielded from lobbying
10. The system encourages good government

http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/10ben_e/10b00_e.htm

Ten Misunderstandings

1. The WTO dictates policy
2. The WTO is for free trade at any cost
3. Commercial interests take priority over development ...
4. ... and over the environment
5. ... and over health and safety
6. The WTO destroys jobs, worsens poverty
7. Small countries are powerless in the WTO
8. The WTO is the tool of powerful lobbies
9. Weaker countries are forced to join the WTO
10. The WTO is undemocratic

http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/10mis_e/10m00_e.htm

8. Conduct research either in a computer lab or with laptops in the classroom. If computers are not available, distribute copies (done beforehand) of the information listed on *Analysis of the WTO* exercise. (Students can share copies.)

9. Have students share the results of their research. (Have lists of Benefits and Misunderstandings displayed.)

10. Discuss the pros and cons of the WTO.

11. Provide information about the protests that follow the Ministerial Meetings around the globe. Use Seattle, as an example. Discuss why some people vehemently oppose the WTO.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Trade_Organization_Ministerial_Conference_of_1999_protest_activity

12. Discuss the pros and cons of each type of trade agreement.

- a. bilateral
- b. regional
- c. multilateral ■